



Parks and Open Spaces Service Manager

Salary: Band 13: £60,906 - £68,200, per annum

37 hours per week

Office attendance is required - this remains flexible, subject to business needs. You will be required to work across the city due to nature of the work,

Location: Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

Contract type: Permanent

Why Join Us?

At Portsmouth City Council, we're committed to creating a greener, healthier, and more connected city. This role offers the chance to make a tangible impact on the environment and community, leading projects that support sustainability, biodiversity, and active lifestyles. You'll be part of a forward-thinking team that values innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

What is the role?

The Parks & Open Spaces Service Manager will provide strategic leadership for a broad and diverse service. The postholder will lead teams to deliver Portsmouth's Parks and Open Spaces strategy and oversee the maintenance and improvement of the council's parks and open spaces, countryside areas, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, allotments, arboriculture and cemeteries. The role requires strong leadership, long-term thinking, effective collaboration across council services and skilled stakeholder management to build productive relationships with residents, communities, elected members, partners and senior colleagues. It will also ensure the service contributes to the council's wider priorities, reflects the ethos of One Council working, and delivers multi-million-pound capital and funded projects such as Bransbury Park and Victoria Park projects.

The successful candidate will report to the Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services and will be a key member of the directorate management team. They will deputise for the Director on matters relating to parks and open spaces, support wider corporate working when required, including supporting the service with workstreams related to the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation.

What You'll Do

You will be responsible for leading, managing and developing the service to deliver a high standard, efficient and effective service in accordance with legislative requirements and the council's policies, procedures, values and behaviours.

To do this, you will be required to:

- **Lead and inspire** a diverse team of 40+ staff, plus seasonal and casual workers, including countryside officers, technical specialists, project officers, landscaping

professionals, grounds management and a small support team. Ensure staff are effectively managed and supported through clear leadership, training and development, a positive focus on wellbeing, and a culture that reflects the council's values and behaviours.

- **Drive excellence** through oversight of in-house services for grounds maintenance, arboriculture, play services, countryside officers and project officers, ensuring high standards and value for money.
- **Champion sustainability** by ensuring services and delivery is aligned with Portsmouth's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, promoting biodiversity, climate resilience and environmentally responsible practices.
- **Shape the future** by driving innovation and service efficiency, taking a commercially minded approach to identify income-generating opportunities and secure external funding streams, and developing long-term strategies for the management and improvement of the council's open spaces and sports grounds.
- **Collaborate and influence** by working across the Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services directorate and building strong relationships with services such as Housing, Neighbourhood & Building Services, and Environment, Transport & Planning and the Climate Resilience team to deliver joined-up solutions and continuous improvement.
- **Build and maintain strategic relationships** with key stakeholders, including residents, community representatives, councillors and partner organisations, to support service delivery and informed decision-making. Maintain positive relationships with customers and elected members, presenting at formal committee and cabinet meetings and community forums, responding to queries, issues and complaints in a timely and professional manner.
- **Manage resources** by taking responsibility for circa £2.4m annual budget, ensuring financial sustainability and operational efficiency, and working effectively with Finance colleagues to keep services within agreed budget limits. Identify potential savings, new income opportunities and sustainable ways of working, drive service and performance improvements, monitor in-year budget spend, and contribute to future budget planning in line with the council's financial strategies and priorities.
- **Encourage community participation** by supporting partnership working and volunteers to conserve, maintain and develop public open spaces, and by enabling the service to work with local groups, volunteers and the public on joint activities, educational initiatives and biodiversity projects.
- **Manage projects** by taking responsibility for all aspects of capital projects, from bid through to completion, in line with the council's procurement procedures, and ensuring projects are delivered to timescales and within agreed budget limits.
- **Ensure compliance** by delivering services and projects in line with the council's policies, procedures and statutory requirements, including procurement, HR,

legal, health and safety, governance and financial regulations. Ensure services comply with current legislation, including safe systems of work, and plan proactively for the impact of future legislative changes on the management of open spaces.

- **Procure goods and services** in accordance with the council's procurement and financial regulations, including preparing specifications, evaluating quotes and tenders, recommending awards, monitoring quality and performance, taking corrective action where required, and maintaining effective budget control.
- **Maintain** accurate records and management information to help inform decision making, monitor performance against KPI's, etc.
- **Collaborate** with the corporate communications team to share information about the service through the website and social media channels, undertake appropriate consultation exercises, and arrange and participate in service-related events and activities.

Who is the person?

You need:

1. Professional qualifications and/or extensive experience in parks and open spaces management, with a deep understanding of operational and strategic challenges and experience of managing horticultural and open spaces, including those with heritage and nature conservation and habitat value, preferably in a local government context.
2. Excellent communication, interpersonal and stakeholder engagement skills, with a strong customer focus and the ability to build and maintain effective working relationships across the service, the wider council and external partners. Able to adapt complex subject matter to provide clear advice, support and provide guidance on legislation, policy and working practices relating to parks and open spaces for a range of audiences, including council colleagues, senior leaders, elected members, contractors and external stakeholders.
3. Ability to lead, motivate, innovate and develop a diverse, multi-site team.
4. Expertise in contract management, procurement, and delivering complex services in dynamic environments.
5. Specialist expertise in advising clients on the delivery and development of services such as play parks, splash parks and other outdoor recreational facilities.
6. A positive, proactive, solution-focused and collaborative approach, which you will embed in the culture and behaviours of your team.
7. The ability to balance conflicting priorities and manage and resolve issues in a calm and constructive way.



8. Confident in presenting information to different audiences at various types of meetings including formal committee and cabinet meetings, community forums, etc.
9. The ability to deliver high-profile services and projects in a challenging environment, meeting corporate priorities to time and within budget.
10. A sound understanding of policies, procedures and legislative framework relevant to the role, including health and safety, HR, finance, IT, procurement, planning and environmental requirements. An understanding of a Councils ways of working with policies and procedures would be an advantage.
11. A full current driving licence and access to a vehicle for work purposes.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our [careers portal](#).